

THE VOTE.  
NOVEMBER 9, 1917.  
ONE PENNY.

# A CLEAR COURSE.

C. NINA BOYLE.

# THE VOTE

## THE ORGAN OF THE WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE

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FRIDAY, NOV. 9, 1917

Edited by C. DESPARD.

**OBJECT:** To secure for Women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community.

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### RUSSIAN WOMEN AND ENFRANCHISEMENT.

The *International Woman Suffrage News* for November contains, in accordance with the Editor's preliminary announcement last week, the very interesting article on the way in which Russian women early in the Revolution demanded and, by their determined attitude, refusing to be content with expressions of sympathy, obtained the definite assurance from Prince Lvoff, President of the Council of Ministers, that "universal suffrage" included women. All suffragists will acclaim the spirited action initiated by the Russian League of Women's Enfranchisement in Petrograd. Finding that there was no mention of votes for women in the programme of the Provisional Government, the League presented a strong resolution to the Provisional Government, which included the following paragraph:—

That to the words "immediate preparation for the Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct, and secret voting" (paragraph 4 of the programme) should be added "without distinction of sex," and to the words "abolition of all limitations of class, creed, and nationality" (paragraph 3) "and of all limitations concerning women," without which the renovation of Russia will not be complete.

Appeals were made to the women of Petrograd and other important towns to unite in the struggle for emancipation; the Council of Workmen's Deputies was urged to strive with more energy and vigour to obtain rights for Russian women; conferences took place, and very successful mass meetings were held to insist on the need for the participation of women in the Constituent Assembly.

Then followed the great demonstration of March 19, when 40,000 women marched to the Duma to demand an answer to the resolution.

In front rode women—Amazons on horseback—for the maintenance of order, a large standard was borne with the words "The Russian League of Women's Enfranchisement,"

and two bands of music. In the middle of the procession was an automobile surrounded by student girls of the Bestougevsy High Courses, and in the car was one of the greatest pioneers of Russian liberty, Vera Nikolaevna Figner, accompanied by the President of the Council of the Russian League of Women's Enfranchisement, Mrs. P. N. Shishkina-Yavein. On the way from the Town Hall to the Imperial Duma crowds of people greeted the manifestants and V. N. Figner, throwing flowers into the car, and expressing their sympathy for the women's movement by shouts: "Long live Women's Franchise!" The maintenance of order in the procession and in the town was entrusted to several women's organisations, who formed squads of women militia.

Amongst the numerous posters the following were foremost: "Place for Women in the Constituent Assembly"; "Electoral Rights for Women"; "Without the Participation of Women the Franchise is Not Universal"; "Women Unite!"; "The 'Working' Women Demand Votes"; "A Free Woman in Free Russia." The composition of the demonstration was very varied. Here were women of the intellectual professions, working women, students, servants, clerks, etc. The halls of the Imperial Duma could not accommodate all the manifestants: V. N. Figner and the President of the Council of the League, P. N. Shishkina-Yavein, went inside. The representatives of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies warmly greeted V. N. Figner as a fighter for liberty. V. N. Figner and P. N. Shishkina-Yavein questioned the Deputies, asking them of the views held by the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies with regard to women's enfranchisement, adding that it was for this answer that the large manifestation of thousands of women had arrived. The President of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, N. S. Tchkeidze, and the Vice-President, M. J. Skobelev, answered that they must confer with the Committee on this question.

The reply of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, after long and weary waiting, was summed up in the words: "For the realisation of your just demands we shall struggle together with you." This was declared to be unsatisfactory, and the women announced that, in spite of rain and mud, they would not disperse until they had received a

definite and categorical answer. Their insistence at last brought out N. S. Tchkeidze, President of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Deputies, and M. V. Rodzianko, President of the Executive Committee of the Imperial Duma. Madame Shishkina-Yavein addressed both gentlemen on the faithful comradeship of women in the struggle for freedom, on the progress of woman suffrage in other countries, and insisted that a Constituent Assembly representing only men could in no wise be regarded as expressing the will of the people. Her vigorous and moving speeches ended with the following declaration:—

Our dear and afflicted country is more than ever in need of a general pacification, in order to be able to commence with united forces the great creative work on the principles of lawfulness and justice. That is the purpose for which we have come here, and declare the vital necessity of immediately issuing an official Government declaration concerning the abolition of all limitation with regard to women. We want no more promises of good-will. We have had enough of them! We demand an official and clear answer—that the women will have votes in the Constituent Assembly. We shall not leave this place until we have received the answer that women will also have the right of votes in the Constituent Assembly, as only in the latter case will it represent the will of all the people—i.e., that the Constituent Assembly will be convoked on the principles of universal, direct, equal, and secret votes, alike for men and women, as without the participation of women the franchise will not be universal.

M. Tchkeidze, in his reply said: "We cannot allow that in free Russia women should continue to be slaves, deprived of rights." M. Rodzianko said: "I do not doubt that both the Provisional Government and the Imperial Duma fully sympathise with the idea of granting electoral rights to women."

Prince Lvoff, President of the Council of Ministers, declared that under the word "universal" the Provisional Government meant the extension of electoral rights to women.

So, adds the communication, "March 19 may be justly regarded as the sacred day and festival of Russian women."

The General Conference of the League afterwards passed the following resolution:—

Regarding the Russian woman as a free citizen after the explanation given by the Provisional Government that the word "universal" denoted the extension of electoral rights to women as well, and guided by civic duty, the Russian League of Women's Enfranchisement warmly calls upon all the women of Petrograd to help the country, and set themselves to work in accord together with their husbands, brothers, and sons, in services connected with the Army.

The League is at present organising an All-Russian Republican Union of the Democratic Women's Organisations, with the view of preparing them for the elections and to the understanding of the political moment, in order that they might assist in the consolidation of the liberties gained by the Revolution, and in the establishment of a democratic Republic, in which it is hoped the woman will occupy an equal place with man.

#### A Woman Presides at the Preliminary Parliament.

The Preliminary Parliament, or Provisional Council, of the Russian Republic was opened at Petrograd on October 20. Mr. Kerensky, after declaring it open, offered the presidential chair to Mme. Breshko Breshkovsky, the senior member of the Provisional Council, who was greeted with enthusiastic applause.

We welcome with warm enthusiasm the honour paid to the veteran fighter for liberty, Catherine Breshkovsky, and rejoice that she should have been the woman chosen to preside at the Preliminary Parliament.

The *Women's Messenger* gives the information that women are now eligible as members of the next Duma, and they have determined to bring forward, among other proposals, the abolition of houses of ill-repute and the medical police control of prostitution and total prohibition of alcoholic drinks. They will appeal for help for the many fatherless and illegitimate children, and make definite proposals for State care of them.

Since June 1 women lawyers and barristers are

entitled to take cases into court and through all stages on the same conditions as men. Women are also to be called upon to serve upon juries on the same conditions as men.

To the Editor of the *International Woman Suffrage News* we again express warm appreciation and gratitude for the admirable service she is rendering to the woman's movement the world over in standing as a link month by month with the women of many nations and recording the progress attained. The November issue contains, in addition to the Russian article, much interesting information about other countries, and an illuminating survey by Miss Sheepshanks of "The World Movement for Woman Suffrage after Three Years of War."

## Women's Freedom League.

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## FORTHCOMING EVENTS: W.F.L. LONDON AND SUBURBS.

Friday, November 9.—Croydon Public Meeting, 32A, The Arcade, High-street, 3.30 p.m. Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle, on "What I saw in Macedonia."

Wednesday, November 14.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, W.C., 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard, on "Reconstruction Now." Admission free. Tea can be obtained in the Café, at 6d., if required.

Saturday, November 17.—(Herne Hill and Norwood Branch). Drawing Room Meeting at 69, Danecroft-road, S.E., 3.30 p.m. Miss C. Nina Boyle, on "What I saw in Macedonia," and Mrs. Tanner. Admission free.

Sunday, November 18.—Discussion Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn. Miss Rebecca West on "The Real Sources of the Inequality of the Sexes." Chair: Miss Nina Boyle. Tea 4.15 to 5 p.m. Lecture 5 p.m., admission by ticket only, prices 2s. 6d. and 1s., from W.F.L., 144, High Holborn, W.C.

Friday, November 30, and Saturday, December 1.—Green, White and Gold Fair, Caxton Hall, Westminster, 2 p.m.—9 p.m. To be opened on first day by Miss Lillah McCarthy—on second day by Miss Eva Moore. Come and buy your Christmas Presents—all kinds of useful and fancy articles. Admission, 1s. before 5 a.m. on Friday, after 5, 6d. Saturday, 6d. all day. Tickets from W.F.L. Office.

### PROVINCES.

Monday, November 12.—Middlesbrough. Open Meeting. Speaker: Mrs. McBean, on "The Middle Class."

Wednesday, November 14.—Portsmouth. Whist Drive, Unitarian Schoolroom, High-street, 3 p.m. Tickets, 1s. each.—Reading. Drawing Room Meeting, 40, Redlands-road (by kind permission of Mrs. Cobb). Speaker: Miss Nina Boyle. Subject: "The Political Outlook." Chair: Miss Anna Munro. 3 p.m. Middlesbrough, Suffrage Centre Democratic Club, 8 p.m.

### SCOTLAND.

Friday, November 9.—Glasgow, Miss Kate Evans' Concert for the Funds, Central Halls, 7 p.m. Tickets, 2s. 4d., 1s. 3d., 8d.

### We draw special attention to

Wednesday, November 14.—Public Meeting, Minerva Café, 144, High Holborn, 3 p.m. Speaker: Mrs. Mustard, on "Reconstruction Now."

### OTHER SOCIETIES.

Monday, November 12.—Uxbridge Woman Suffrage Society, at Brookfield House, 70, High-street, 7 p.m. Speaker: Miss Boyle, on "A Modern View of Ancient Macedonia." Chair: Miss Raleigh. Admission free. Home Workers' League, Oxford House, Mape-street, Bethnal Green, 2.30 p.m. Miss Newcome.

Saturday, November 17.—Newcastle Literary and Social Club, 7.30. Speaker: Miss Ada Broughton. Subject: "Women's Responsibilities and the Parliamentary Vote."

## POLITICAL NOTES.

### Representation of the People Bill.

After a week's interval, during which the House of Commons devoted itself to other business, the Representation of the People Bill is again under consideration this week. As we go to press the House has got so far as to refuse on a division (223 votes to 70) the plea of London Members to increase their number by four, from 60 to 64, but Sir George Cave has agreed that Holborn and Finsbury shall be separate constituencies, each with one representative. Had London's request been granted, said the Home Secretary, many other parts of the country would have made out a good case for additional Members, and considerable delay would have ensued. It is expected that the House will conclude the Committee stage of the Bill this week.

### Those "Frightening Questions."

From the slightly confused debates in the House we gather that the plural vote conferred on women by the Bill for the Representation of the People as at first drafted is to be severely checked, and that to their many arduous duties officers at polling booths are to add the duty of sternly questioning women voters as to their qualifications. A woman may vote for a Parliamentary candidate: (1) if she be a local government voter; (2) if she be the wife of a local government voter; (3) if she be a University graduate. But she must choose, and stick to, one qualification or the other. She is not to be allowed to use all three at any one general election; nor, we presume, for the purposes of any by-election or elections. She will be asked whether she has already polled her vote in that or any other constituency at that election, on either of the other qualifications; so as to ensure that she only votes once, for one candidate and one constituency; and presumably she will be instructed in the penalties for a false statement or a plural vote. She may also be required to make a statement on oath that she has reached the statutory age—30; and we may further presume that this subtle form of compliment will only be paid to those whose youthful appearance belies their claim to the maturity of "statutory age." These enquiries are the "frightening questions" which Sir George Cave and Sir George Younger and Mr. Gulland considered would prove so disastrous to the feminine *morale* and likely to scare them away from the poll as crows are scared by the farmer's boy with an unloaded and antiquated shot-gun. The two Sir Georges and their companion have evidently got a good deal yet to learn about their countrywomen. The pet masculine joke about women is the dangers they will cheerfully encounter to get a bit of cheap lace at a bargain sale. Do they think these stalwarts are going to be terrorised by a timid male functionary and a couple of questions? Go to!

## PARLIAMENT AND WOMEN'S AFFAIRS.

### Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

On October 31, in the House of Commons, Col. Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck made the following statement:—

I have had brought to my notice the grievances of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps. I notice on the posters on the walls that recruits are urgently wanted for this corps, and I believe recruiting is by no means satisfactory, and that the force is by no means up to strength. Of course, there is a reason for it, and the reason for it is that the conditions of service are by no means satisfactory. I asked a question a day or two ago as to whether these girls were entitled to pensions if they lost their health. I was told that they have the Insurance Act and the Workmen's Compensation Act to fall back upon if they lose their health. As the whole idea in recruiting these women is to consider them as part of the Army, I think they have a very strong claim to pensions supposing that their health is ruined for life. The manner in which they are being treated

in France is not, to my mind, at all satisfactory, and it accounts for the discontent and unpopularity from which this corps suffers. For instance, these girls only get one pair of shoes issued to them. If those get wet and have to be mended these girls have to supply the deficiency themselves. No underclothing is issued to them, and no rain-proof cloak or mackintosh. It may be easily understood that when these girls get wet, as they have only one set of uniform issued to them, they have to sit and let the clothes dry on their bodies. I am told that at the hotel at Havre there is a sick room, but that there are no attendants, no appliances, and no sick diet. These may occur to my hon. friend as small points, but they make up a sum total which I think is militating against the success of this corps.

In reply the Under-Secretary of State for War (Mr. Macpherson) said:—

For my own part—I am not speaking officially, but I shall make it if possible official—I do think that if women take upon themselves certain obligations and conditions to go to France, or to any theatre of war, and to undertake work which, in other circumstances, would have to be undertaken by men, duly enlisted, I think that so far as possible, consistent, of course, with the interests of the taxpayer, those women should have the same rights as the men who have duly enlisted. If the question of pension does arise, and a pension would be due to a man because of the work which he has undertaken under military service in any theatre of war, I say that if a woman in the same category, doing the same class of work, is to become disabled, and she would be entitled to a pension in civilian life, I think that the Government might consider that a pension should be given to the woman in such circumstances. In regard to uniform I am not quite sure whether I am speaking right, but my noble friend, who has served his country abroad, and others who have been abroad will correct me if I am wrong. I understand that there is only one uniform dealt out to a soldier when he goes to the front, and one pair of boots. The women of the Army Auxiliary Corps are no worse and no better off in this respect than an ordinary soldier. Probably they do not undertake work which would render it more possible that one pair of boots or shoes would be liable to waste quicker than a pair of boots allotted to a man. That is a matter which I am not so sure that I can recommend with the same power as I can recommend the first part of my noble friend's suggestion. However, it is a question which requires consideration, and I will make it my duty as soon as possible to consult the authorities concerned, and see whether anything can be done in the matter. If I have missed any point I hope that any hon. members concerned will bring the matter before me personally, and I will endeavour to have it rectified or remedied as best as I can.

### "A Woman's Job."

On November 1, Captain Douglas Hall, in discussing the merits and demerits of the site of Osborne College, declared:—

The boys could be better looked after by having a proper matron. She might see a little boy looking peaky, and she would ask: "What is the matter with you?" That is a woman's job, and it is only part of their nature to look after children, and you will not get all these things attended to by regulations and orders.

### United States Soldiers to Vote on Woman Suffrage.

The United States Government has followed the example of Australia and Canada in making arrangements for soldiers and sailors on active service to take part in an election. In France men of the State of New York are to join with the men at home in voting on the question of woman suffrage, and the women of the State, as also of other States and other lands, hope that they will recognise their claims to citizenship. A leaflet circulated amongst the voters says: "You have come to Europe to fight for the liberty of other peoples; now is your opportunity to vote for the liberty of your own people. Vote 'Yes' on woman suffrage on November 6, 1917."

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## THE VOTE.

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FRIDAY, November 9th, 1917.

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### A-CLEAR COURSE.

In the present mood of the nation—a trifle inclined to rhapsody and easily moved by clap-trap eloquence anent "war work" and "saving the country"—no one likes to rise up and denounce openly the new Franchise Bill. M.P.'s, nervous about their seats, party men who cannot estimate how the new elements will affect the party balance, leaders of tiresome but not always ineffective *coteries* in the House of Commons, die-hards of the Old Guard, and yelping exponents of newer gospels; all glance with straining eyeballs at the shadow of the unknown in the future electorate: the very young men; the men whose point of view has been hardened, or widened, or brutalised, by war; the men who have cause sternly to condemn the inefficiency that has wrought untold havoc; and, above all, the women.

No one loves the thought of the women. The soft folds of affection and adoration in which we are supposed to be lapped by men are rudely shaken when the prospect is envisaged of an invasion of political life by those same loved and adored ones. The affection and the adoration turn out to be a very thin veneer overlying much distrust and genuine fear. There are also not wanting evidences of dislike. But "war work" has carried the day—a pinchbeck recognition without value or stability, save and except that it has secured, at a certain psychological moment, the passage of the women's clause into the Government measure.

We must not allow ourselves to forget, in the midst of the vain plaudits assailing our ears—plaudits for work not one-fifth part of the value of the normal work done by women without remark or reward through the ages—we must not forget that something of this result was due to fear. The militant agitation had died down, it is true; or rather, it had been voluntarily suspended. In their colossal ignorance of women, Members of Parliament could not say what was behind that suspension; whether it was an entire abandonment of the claim set up, or merely a case of *reculer pour mieux sauter*. The one thing to be dreaded was a return to the days of interruptions, protection by detectives, and arrests under circumstances that could now be most effectively denounced as "Hunnish!" We must not leave out of consideration, therefore, when we listen to the foolish praise ladled out to us by foolish persons and a very, very foolish Press, the salubrious influences of mingled relief at the cessation of annoyance, and dread of its recurrence.

Nevertheless, the foolish praise has gone to the heads of some women, even suffragettes. They seem to believe that because some politicians and fellow-men have acknowledged them to be human beings of a definite value, and have promised to make them citizens in their own country, that therefore these same politicians have changed their skin and washed off their spots. They appear to believe that all is now safe in the hands of these gentlemen, not only the prospects of the Bill in which the political fortunes of women are wrapped up, but the prospects of other things which the consensus of suffragist opinion has long decided are not to be trusted to male hands alone. We have had, not so long ago, the deplorable spectacle of two or three well-known women professing suffrage views, imploring the Home Secretary to hurry on in his execrable Criminal Law Amendment Bill—before women are enfranchised. We have seen, quite latterly, signs of a desire to hustle the Government into pushing on the Education Bill—before women were enfranchised. We note the clamour, in which many women have joined, to secure the establishment of a public department of health—before women are enfranchised. Suffragists of some classes are mixed up in all these deplorable attempts to take power out of the purview of the future woman voter. We are not surprised when we see the signatures of their spiritual lordships of Winchester and Oxford in support of the demand for the further progress of the Education Bill. Bishops, we suppose, must "bish"; it is what they are for. Besides, they are men; and they are the inveterate supporters and anointed champions of the highest form of masculine arrogance. But we appeal to women to refrain from these disastrous campaigns, which are, one and all, no matter how wrapped up they may be in various guises as pertaining to the "welfare of the people," definitely anti-suffrage in intention and in effect.

They are anti-suffrage in effect because they will have, if successful, the result of taking out of the hands of women voters the decisions and the appointments pertaining to these important matters—Health, Morals, Education—and leaving them only, as usual, the subordinate functions on lines already cast. They will have the result of keeping these most urgent matters within the range of that administrative imbecility which has ruined some of the best legislation ever passed, and against which we have lifted our voice for years in vain. They will have the result of robbing women of place, power, and initiative. And they are anti-suffrage in intention because the more of this sort of thing that can be manoeuvred, the more chance there is of the Government's autumn programme becoming overloaded. When the ship is overloaded something will be thrown overboard to lighten it. Need we point to the grave danger that the jettisoned cargo will be the Bill with the perilous clauses—the Bill for the Representation of the People? Could Parliamentarians resist the temptation to say: We had to choose between granting you an academic right for yourselves, or giving you those good things you desire for the community—education for the boys and girls, safety for the infant lives, coercion for flighty young persons? We know that woman will readily sacrifice herself a little longer for the good of the community; and so on as in the past. And it would not be by any means unreasonable.

Women must choose what they want—the power to do the necessary things themselves, as they would like them to be done, or the privilege of standing aside and seeing men do them badly. We urge every woman who believes in our cause, and in herself, to leave these other matters severely alone, and to discourage any attempt to deal with them now; and to concentrate her energies on getting support and progress for the Bill for the Representation of the People, the Government measure which includes women.  
C. NINA BOYLE.

### ON OUR LIBRARY TABLE.

I wish to draw the attention of our readers to "The Hidden Tragedy," written by our friend and colleague, Miss Eunice G. Murray. The story itself, freshly and vividly told, has a strong fascination. The delineation of character, especially that of the heroine, Kathleen Kennedy, the brief but living descriptions of scenery and the skilfully unfolded development of the plot would of themselves give charm to the book, and will, we feel sure, attract the story-reading public. For those, however, to whom the woman's movement, in all its varied aspects, is dear, it has a much stronger fascination. In a perfectly natural manner, some of the most thrilling scenes of the strange drama that preceded the war have been woven into this story. We see, on the one hand, "The Hidden Tragedy," outcome of woman's helplessness and man's domination ruining two women's lives and going near to wreck the life of a third; and, on the other, the uprising in young womanhood of the spirit which says "I can; I must; I will."

Even in Kathleen's happy youth, before the knowledge of the tragedy had darkened her life, we find this new spirit showing itself. She persuades her adoring grandmother to send her to Girton. She has a glorious time there, and makes many friends. When they were having a farewell meeting it occurred to her to look back to the day of the opening of the College by thirteen brave women in 1873.

"Do you know," she said, "I never cease to feel a pang of gratitude to those pioneer women—they affronted public opinion and came here in face of ridicule and in spite of prejudice."

Her friend said *she* could never have done it. She was not a fighter.

"I am," replied Kathleen simply. "I do not care so much for having things as for overcoming difficulties. . . . I've loved being here. I would rather have been one of the women whose courage was to make it possible for you and me to come."

This was the girl, and she stands for a type who, when the call went forth from those who raised the flag of revolt, in the face of danger, obloquy and all sorts of nameless humiliations, "Whom shall we send and who will go for us?" was ready with the brave answer: "Here am I; send me!"

The story of how Kathleen, now alone in the world and dependent on her own exertions, comes across the Suffragists in the throes of a hotly-contested by-election, of her adventures in an election meeting addressed by the candidate, and when her bold demand for votes for women as a plank in the democratic programme created a panic, of the treatment she received from a mob of infuriated electors, and of the few plain words which, in spite of twelve policemen and detectives in plain clothes, she succeeded in addressing to the great man as he was stepping into his car, is admirably told. As we read it we feel a reminiscent thrill.

Kathleen lived to do other things: humble work, such as chalking pavements and walking at Westminster between posters; big work, such as creating obstruction in the streets, speaking in prohibited areas, being arrested, spending weeks in prison; but, true to her type, nothing daunted her. What, to me, gives special interest to this side of the story is that there runs through it a great experience. Not her own wrongs, not even the material grievances of women and children which were continually before her, was the moving force of this gallant girl's self-surrender. The call that had come to her was spiritual, and she was bound to obey. In this was the secret of her strength. Those who have come the most closely in touch with the woman's movement in the gay and glorious days of pioneering

\* "The Hidden Tragedy." Eunice G. Murray. (C. W. Daniels. 2s. net.)

which are fast receding into the distance, with the others, an on-coming host, who, aware that the battle it not yet won, refuse, on any pretext, to lower their standard, will feel when they read "The Hidden Tragedy" a deep gratitude to Miss Murray for having given to them this bright and, here and there, humorous picture of a brave girl's conflicts and victories in those heroic days.  
C. DESPARD.

### OUR "WEDNESDAYS."

There was a large attendance on October 31, when Miss Abadam spoke on "The Feminist Revision of Theological Values," Mrs. Mustard presided. Miss Abadam's main theme was that a male deity, male ascendancy in heaven, is the bedrock of woman's subjection on earth. This ascendancy is a cardinal feature of the Jewish and Christian religions, which are comparatively youthful in the history of humanity, but millions of people to-day think and speak of God as She. Miss Abadam pointed out the startling agreement in the matter of female deities and the discoveries of modern biology, that slow working and reasoning back to the primeval status of the female. "In the beginning all life was female." Lester Ward shows that woman is the primary sex. She is the race; the male is an after-thought of nature, invented and developed for the sake of variation. All ancient religions look to a Great Mother. In China, the oldest of all civilizations, the Mother delivers the world. In the Swedish Professor Bjerregaard's notable work, "The Great Mother; or the Eternally Feminine," he maintains that if we substituted "She" for "He" in our Scriptures we should be approaching the truth. In Greek and Scandinavian mythology the Trinity consisted of three virgins. The legend of Demeter and Persephone is of the mother and the daughter; a strong tendency existed to replace the latter by the son, and eventually the father was substituted for the mother. The Hebrew people were strongly prejudiced against women, and seized on the tendency to masculinize. The figure of the Mother amongst the early Christians was replaced by that of the Father, and, of course, the Son. In St. Mark's, Venice, an old mosaic depicts the Mother as giving Adam a soul. The Chaldaic sacred books, which are very feminine, represent Adam as taken from Eve's side. Two great epochs marked the masculinization of the Scriptures. Ezra edited all the sacred books, very roughly, after the return from Babylon, and after his time the expunging of the Divine Mother continued. The second period was the collection of the Christian Canon, in which the Mother was finally blotted out of the Trinity. Forgers and falsifiers have been rampant among our translations; there are many passages where a male deity has been substituted for a female. The analogy between biology and theology is striking. As the mother is found to be at the head of the stream of physical life, even so is she head of the stream of spiritual life. A male priesthood can never teach humanity the highest truth. Miss Abadam called for a strictly truthful translation of the Scriptures, and told the story of the Bishop, one of the revisers of the 1886 version, who said that the task of putting the pronouns right had been left to the revisers of the future.

Miss Boyle spoke on the ideals which women must hold before them in public life. The audience warmly supported the thanks expressed by Mrs. Mustard to Miss Abadam for her interesting and enlightening lecture.

### Women Judges for Children.

Why should not women be appointed to serve as judges in the juvenile courts that sit in various parts of the country? asks the *Law Journal*. In more than one of the Colonies they have been permitted to take a part in the work of these tribunals.

## OUR POINT OF VIEW.

**Brutality to Women.**

The murderous attacks on women, which never show any real diminution in war or peace—but which, we may presume, would be enormously increased in war time were the sexes still in the same close contact as in peace—continue throughout the country. The hideous murder of a hapless refugee woman of good character, which has startled London, is casually referred to by one Sunday paper, *The Evening Telegram*, as an event of trifling importance. This paper marvels that we can occupy ourselves about the dismembering of one woman when hundreds of men are daily blown to bits at the Front. The editor seems to forget that those men go to their danger of high resolve and set purpose, at a definite call; and they know whence the danger comes and why. They are not brutally done to death by someone in the guise of friend or lover, someone whose familiar companionship enables the traces to be easily covered, someone who lurks about the community a source of unknown, ever-present danger to other women. The law and the male population have dealt hardly by women; and the never-diminishing toll of murdered women is the heaviest possible indictment of both. The double standard of morality operates most perilously and provides excuses and incentive for all these forms of brutality. Only recently we saw a woman sent to three years' imprisonment for bigamously marrying three men. We are not told that she deserted any children, or did any-one any harm except draw Government allowances; but the week before a soldier, who had a wife and large family, and who had bigamously married an unfortunate girl munition worker, was let off with one month. For hideous crimes of violence on women and girls, it is common to see sentences of six weeks, or even fines of £5 or £10. But recently a man who assaulted, and—fearful crime—also *robbed* a girl of a little money, was given five years. Robbery is the grave crime in the eyes of the law to-day; just as heresy used to be in days gone by.

**Why Employ a Child?**

The woman reformer should constantly keep the law and its administration under observation. On October 29, Mary Elizabeth Orchard, a postwoman, aged seventeen, was sentenced at Carmarthen Assizes to eighteen months' hard labour for stealing £3,000 from a registered letter. We are as anxious as anybody that the Post-office should be well organised, its work performed efficiently and honestly. The majesty of the law declares that children of seventeen are incapable of managing or willing away their own property; debts contracted by minors cannot be legally recovered. Why, then, employ a child to handle registered letters containing immense sums of money? One wonders whether a babe is at the head of Carmarthen Post-office.

## OUR OPEN COLUMN.

Correspondents are informed that the Editor cannot accept for publication letters which do not bear the name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication but as a guarantee of bona fides.

## CHILDREN IN AIR RAIDS.

To the Editor of THE VOTE.

DEAR EDITOR,—Owing to certain dangers of war children are being sent to presumably safe places. This is quite right, but the curious feature of the arrangement lies in the fact that in some, if not all, cases, *children* means *boys*. At a large school in our district only the youthful male is being sent into safety, and the girl, the future wife and mother, is left to face the danger. Some girls and boys belonging to this school were discussing the pros and cons of the matter. "It is not fair," said one bright girl. "Why should you go to — and we stay here?" "Oh!" laughed a boy, and a nice boy, too, "it is we boys who matter, you can't be soldiers by and by."—Yours in the cause of Equality for the Sexes.

Laura HAWARD.

6, Cathcart Hill, N. 19. November 4, 1917.

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS.

## WOMEN CLERKS AFTER THE WAR.

A conference was recently called in London to consider this matter. Unfortunately the speeches dealing with this subject were not made by women clerks, and the discussion which followed was of little practical value to those who are genuinely interested in the question. We heard a good deal about the pocket-money woman—she was also a pre-war bogey—and although she was discussed pretty frequently, most of us had never seen her, much less come in competition with her! The speakers considered that when the war was over there would be a great army of women clerks—mostly from Government offices—for whom work could not be found. Many of these would not be obliged to earn their living, and all those who could manage to do so were advised to turn their attention to welfare work, maternity centres, home helpers, infant care committees, schools for mothers, day nurseries, and all other similar work, for which the speakers considered that women generally are supremely well fitted. The suggestion evidently was that as many women as possible should get out of the clerical profession and not that its doors should be more widely opened to efficient women. The Women's Freedom League has, in season and out of season, maintained that the higher posts in the Civil Service, as well as in the commercial world, should be thrown open equally to men and women, and that equal pay should be given to men and women in the various grades of clerkships. One speaker at this conference complained that many women clerks were not as competent as they might be. We are convinced that both the Government and the commercial world could get all the competence and initiative that they want from women if they would improve the remuneration and conditions for women's clerical work. When women realise that they can have a successful career in the clerical world, on an equal footing with men, there will be no lack of women of ability and education to take their chances with men in that profession. Readers of THE VOTE will be interested to know that one speaker solemnly maintained that if women clerks showed higher efficiency in their work, higher wages would follow, presumably as the night the day! We think that women clerks themselves should call a conference to consider very seriously their position now, and what it is to be after the war.

F. A. U.

## Hartlepool Again!

The Hartlepool Trades Council made a slight improvement upon their previous attitude by calling a special meeting on October 24, to be addressed by Miss Ellis on the subject of prohibition of the serving of women in public-houses. Miss Ellis said that, as Trade Unionists, they should exercise great caution in supporting police mandates. Their part was to resist encroachments on the liberty of the subject, otherwise they were false to the fundamental principles of their existence. Grandmotherly legislation of a negative type must give way to the positive kind, which insisted on the conformity of men to the ideals which they imposed upon women. Women resented their recent action, because it was a denial of that moral responsibility which was the birth-right of every human being. Several members of the Council spoke in defence of their action, and one member read a list of serious cases of drunkenness in women (none, however, from Hartlepool!). The chairman stated that what the Council really objected to most was the treating of disolute men whom the women met in the public-houses. Others talked of the need for a sober democracy.

Miss Ellis, in replying, said that to talk of responsibility and democracy in the same breath as of protecting women from themselves was a mere mockery. She thought that the members would have been better employed in "protecting" those of their own sex referred to by the chairman. It was time that they ceased to regard woman as an exactly balanced compound of angel and devil, and realised that she was a human being who, therefore, must work out her own salvation. It was interesting to note that several members who declared that they represented women admitted that they had not dreamed of consulting them!

THEY SUPPORT US.

## GREEN, WHITE AND GOLD FAIR.

The National Executive Committee's stall at our Fair will be the Handkerchief Stall, on which will be found all manner of handkerchiefs, handkerchief sachets and scent-bags, and dainty articles made from handkerchiefs. The stall will be in charge of Mrs. Corner and Miss Boyle; and all contributions, in the shape of handkerchiefs, made-up articles, or scent-bags may be sent to the care of either of the above ladies at Headquarters Office, 144, High Holborn. Any members of the Executive who will help as stallholders and sellers are invited to send their names in early, stating what day and what time it would be convenient to call upon them to give their services.

## STALLS AND STALLHOLDERS.

1. *General Stall*.—Useful and fancy articles of every description, Christmas presents, presents for soldiers, sailors and nurses. Mrs. Mustard, Mrs. Tanner, Mrs. Thomson.
2. *White Stall*.—Ladies and children's underclothing, tea-cloths, d'oyleys, household linen. Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, Miss Triplett, Mrs. Whetton.
3. *Handkerchief Stall*.—Handkerchiefs of various kinds and articles made of handkerchiefs. Miss Boyle and Mrs. Corner on behalf of the N.E.C.
4. *Home-made Provisions*.—Mrs. Terry, Mrs. Thompson.
5. *Toy Stall*.—Dolls, books, and toys of all kinds. Mrs. Lindus, the Misses Stutchbury.
6. *Montgomery Boroughs Stall*.—General Stall. All kinds of useful articles and Christmas presents. Miss Clark.
7. *Cake and Candy Stall* (Montgomery Boroughs).—Miss Clark.

8. "*Vote*" Stall (in memory of Mrs. Snow).—The proceeds of the stall go to the funds of THE VOTE. Mrs. Abbot, Miss A. E. Jacob, Miss A. A. Smith, Mrs. Tritton.

9. *Literature Stall*.—Literature of the Suffrage Movement, books, Christmas cards, Calendars, etc. Miss Hodge, Miss Telling.

Stalls have been taken by the following Societies:—W.F.L. Nine Elms Settlement, the Free Church League for Women's Suffrage, United Suffragists, Independent W.S.P.U., Minerva Dressmaking Department, Friends of Armenia. Phychic Delineations by Mrs. Thomson Price. The Violet Clark Quartette will play at intervals during the day.

## Propaganda by "The Vote."

The Editor thanks very warmly the members of Branches who are making special efforts not only to maintain but to increase the circulation of THE VOTE, and fully appreciates the determination with which they are overcoming difficulties. Our weekly paper is essential to every member of the League; it keeps them informed on the political situation and the progress of our cause at home and abroad. It is a valuable means of bringing to the knowledge of the public the nation's need of women's votes, and why women are still waging the long fight for their enfranchisement. To sell THE VOTE in the streets every week, to increase the list of regular subscribers, to send copies to soldiers, sailors, and nurses, who find it interesting reading, is a means within the reach of every member of helping to win citizenship for women and equal opportunities with men in work and service.

## Home Workers' League.

We have great pleasure in recording that the Home Workers' League, Oxford House, Bethnal Green, have become interested readers and buyers of THE VOTE. Among the speakers at their Monday afternoon meetings before Christmas are Miss Harriet Newcomb, Mrs. Despard, Miss Boyle, and Miss Eunice G. Murray. We congratulate the League on its success in securing compensation from the Government for one of its members who suffered in a recent air raid.

AN ENCOURAGING REPORT.—The Middlesbrough Maternity and Infant Welfare Central Committee are able to record successful work during the first year of their existence. The increased interest in and care of child-life is having a good effect on the serious infantile mortality record of Middlesbrough. Four centres have been at work, and the Medical Officer of Health points out that the deaths among babies attending the centres have been remarkably few in comparison with the usual mortality of the districts; 60 per 1,000 compared with over 150 per 1,000 is indeed strong evidence of the value and importance of the work. The moral is: Still more centres and still greater extension of the work. Congratulations to Mrs. Schofield Coates, who is hon. secretary to the committee, and takes a keen, practical interest in its work.

IMPORTANT.—As THE VOTE goes to press on TUESDAYS, will contributors, Branch secretaries, and others kindly remember that all articles, notes, etc., must reach THE VOTE Office, 144, High Holborn, London, W.C. 1, on MONDAYS? Tuesday morning's post is reserved for late and urgent information.

SEE OUR SALE AND EXCHANGE, PAGE 40.

## BRANCH NOTES.

## Anfield.

The monthly meeting of the Branch was held on October 19, when Miss Appleton, of Bootle, spoke on "Our Coming Work." She showed how women's status had been weakened by the great differences made between the sexes, and amused her audience by giving the replies of many people to her question: "What is Womanliness?" The meeting was very ably presided over by Mrs. Ridgway. We also had the pleasure of enrolling three new members.

## Chester, The Suffrage Shop, St. Werburgh Street.

On October 16 an interesting evening was spent at the meeting room of the Chester Debating Society; Miss Neale, of Manchester, opened a debate on the Representation of the People Bill, and proposed the following resolution:—"That the Representation of the People Bill is acceptable as a compromise and should speedily become law." Mr. Shuttleworth, of Chester, opposed the resolution, on the ground that the Bill was an injustice at the present time, and was given more as a present for good children than as a necessary reform. The resolution was carried with enthusiasm. The members of the Chester Branch of the Women's Freedom League thank Miss Neale very warmly for her kindness in opening the debate, and hope to have the pleasure of hearing her speak again in the near future.

## Croydon Office, 32a, The Arcade, High-street.

Miss Boyle has kindly promised to take the afternoon meeting on November 9, in place of Miss Dorothy Evans, who is unable to attend, but whom we hope to have the pleasure of hearing at some future date. Will some member or friend help our sewing party by sending a parcel of material that may be turned into useful garments to be sold at the Fair? Those who cannot come to the sewing meetings are asked to make any saleable and useful article to contribute to the contribution of the Branch to the Fair.

## Dundee.

A Branch Meeting was held in the Steeple Club on November 1. Miss Husband presided. Representatives who had attended a meeting of the Workers' Educational Association gave in their reports, and after some discussion it was agreed to affiliate with this society. Miss Gibson, hon. treasurer, gave an account of the meeting of the Scottish Council she had attended, and the various items of business discussed. A resolution was passed, urging members of Parliament to ensure the passing of a Scottish Education Bill this session. Copies were instructed to be sent to the Prime Minister, the Secretary for Scotland, and local members. Some work and donations of money were handed in for the Fair at headquarters. Correspondence was also considered.

## Middlesbrough Suffrage Club, 251a, The Arcade Linthorpe-road.

On October 29, Miss Cooke, of West Hartlepool, visited the Branch and gave an address on "War-time Poetry," quoting a number of examples, and showing the various characteristics developed in the soldiers by war life. Mrs. A. Schofield Coates ably presided.

## Women's Freedom League Settlement, 93, Nine Elms-lane, S.W. 8.

Cordial thanks to Mrs. Hughes and Miss Gibson for pears and vegetables; Mrs. Stirling and Miss Greenville, clothing; Miss Wilson, handkerchiefs; Mrs. Walpole, 30s.; Miss Rig-gall, 1s.; and to Mr. Delbanco for making a beautiful table for the nursery, which now only wants a high fireguard and a few low stools to complete its equipment. A new development of the Guest House is the taking in for the time between school and bed of children whose mothers are out at work and want to keep them out of the dangerous streets after nightfall. We are also expecting this week as a "day-boarder" a child who is crowded out of the Guest House as a resident. We hope some VOTE readers are preparing contributions for our stall at the Fair, which we want to make a great success to help with our increasing expenses.

The Despard Arms,  
123, Hampstead-road, N.W. 1.

Early in December we shall have a Jumble Sale, and shall be grateful to friends for contributions of every kind. Men's and boys' clothes and boots are in great demand, also coats and skirts, blouses, underclothing, etc. for women and girls, and household articles. Parcels may be sent at once, addressed to the Manageress.

## Please Take Note!

We call the special attention of our readers to "Our Wednesday," on November 10, when Mrs. Mustard will speak on "Reconstruction," and an opportunity will be given for discussion. Come and bring many friends and many ideas!

FRIDAY,  
NOV. 9,  
1917.

# THE VOTE

ONE  
PENNY  
WEEKLY.

Organ of the Women's Freedom League.

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**SUPERIOR COAT LENGTH** of  
**BLACK PONY CLOTH**; 18s. 9d.  
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**TWO SUPERIOR SEMI-EVENING**  
**DRESSES**, suit slim, tall lady;  
**GERANIUM TAFFETA**, and **GREEN**  
**VELVET** and **SILK**, perfect condition;  
35s. each.

**BLACK SEMI-EVENING SATIN**  
and **NET DRESS**; small size;  
14s. 6d.

**VERY FINE SECOND-HAND**  
**LIGHT BEAR SET**, long stole  
and muff; 12 guineas; cost more than  
double.

**COSTUME LENGTH FINE BLACK**  
**SERGE**, with white stripe; 35s.

**SEVERAL CHILDREN'S DRESSES**  
and **COATS**; very moderate.

**NEW PALE BLUE CREPE-DE-**  
**CHINE SEMI-EVENING**  
**BLOUSE**; 16s. 11d.; several others.

**SEVERAL SILK AND SATIN**  
**JUMPERS**, fur and embroidery  
trimming; cheap.

**ANTIQUÉ FRENCH CLOCK** and  
**ORNAMENTS** to match; Derby  
pattern; £9 the set.

**ELECTRO-PLATED TEA** and  
**COFFEE SERVICE**; £2.

**SEVERAL second-hand WINTER**  
**COATS**, from 7s. 6d. each.

**SEVERAL STYLISH VELVET AND**  
**VELOUR HATS**, at very moderate  
prices.

**HANDSOME ROSEWOOD CHIP-**  
**FONNIER**, marble top, glass doors  
and mirror back, perfect condition,  
3ft. 6in. wide; £2 15s.

**SET OF MINK FURS**, in good condi-  
tion; £6 6s.

**SET OF BLACK FOX FURS**,  
£3 10s.

**ANTIQUÉ PEARL RING**; 25s.—  
Write REX, c/o "THE VOTE"  
Office.

**A 5ft. 6in. IRON BEDSTEAD**,  
spring mattress and hair ditto;  
24s.

**MOLE CREPE DE CHINE**  
**BLOUSE**; 6s. 11d.

**HALF-DOZEN FISH KNIVES** and  
**FORKS**; 14s. 6d.

### FOR SALE—cont.

**INDIAN CARPET**, 9ft. 6in. by  
9ft. 8in., centre cream ground,  
border light blue ground, good colour-  
ing, woven right through, very hand-  
some, equal new; £9 9s.

**HANDSOME OLD RED MAHO-**  
**GANY CHEST DRAWERS**,  
3ft. 6in., 4ft. high, pillars at sides,  
crack across middle of one drawer;  
price £4 14s. 6d.

**18-CT. GOLD PENDANT**, set pearls  
and turquoise; 27s. 6d.

**LARGE THICK FELT CARPET**,  
12ft. by 18ft., peacock blue, not  
much used; £5 5s.; quality and dye  
pre-war.

**ORANGE SATIN EVENING COAT.**

**TWO NEW OSTRICH FEATHER**  
**CAPIES**, navy and natural;  
27s. 6d. each.

**SILVER CHAIN PURSE**, 2½oz.;  
25s.

**TWO SOUP LADLES** and some  
**FORKS** and **SPOONS**; cheap.

**VERY SUPERIOR LONG SEAL**  
**MUSQUASH FUR COAT**, with  
whole-skin black fox collar; 25 guineas.

**GENTLEMAN'S REAL LEATHER,**  
**SILVER-MOUNTED CIGAR-**  
**ETTE CASE**; best quality; 12s. 6d.

**SECONDHAND SET** of **SABLE**  
**MINK COLLAR** and **MUFF**;  
28s. 6d.

**NEW SAXE BLUE MOIRE SILK**  
**UNDERSKIRT**, 12s. 11d., and  
satin-striped ditto, 7s. 11d.

**EMBROIDERED BLACK SATIN**  
**COAT**, and **HAT** to match; suit  
girl of 8 to 12 years; 17s. 6d.

**STRONG ART CARPET** (two-sided),  
grey ground, 8ft. by 9ft., slightly  
soiled, but not worn; 24s.

**VERY FINE IRISH LINEN FIVE**  
**O'CLOCK TEACLOTH**; hem-  
stitched, with hand crochet lace,  
48½in.; £2 10s.

**VERY SUPERIOR SAXE BLUE**  
**MACKINTOSH**, suit tall lady;  
£2 5s.

### TO LET.

**TO LET, FURNISHED, FIRST**  
**FLOOR** of good house, sitting-  
room, bedroom, kitchen, bath (hot and  
cold), no attendance; terms moderate.

**A WELL-FURNISHED** and **CON-**  
**VENIENT HOUSE TO LET**, at  
Finchley, quite near to Golder's Green  
Station; worth viewing; rent by  
arrangement.—Apply "Vote" Office.

### WANTED.

**SUFFICIENT FURNITURE FOR**  
**TWO ROOMS**; to be paid for by  
monthly instalments; must be plain,  
but good.—Mrs. T., c/o "THE VOTE"  
Office.

**WANTED, USEFUL HELP**, all  
duties, small house, plain cook-  
ing, three in family, help for rough  
work, labour-saving devices.—State  
salary and references, Mrs. Scott, The  
Willows, Chiswick Mall, W. 4.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

**LESSONS** in **PIANOFORTE** and  
**SINGING** by Mrs. Silvester  
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Accompanist at Concerts, Dances, &c.  
—43, Black Lion-lane, Ravenscourt-  
park, W. 6.

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**AND HOW TO USE THEM, free.**  
Send for one.—TRIMMELL, The Herbalist,  
144, Richmond-rd., Cardiff. Est. 1879.

**THE HANDICRAFTS**, 82, High-  
street, Hampstead, N.W.—Hand-  
weavings, Hand-made Laces, Home-  
spuns, Jewellery, Basketwork, Pottery,  
etc.

### LECTURES.

**BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMAN**  
**SUFFRAGE UNION.**—Lectures,  
1917-18, at Minerva Café, 144, High  
Holborn. "Woman and Revolution:  
Two Centuries of European History."  
With special reference to economic  
problems. Lecturer, Margaret Hodge.  
Seventh Lecture, Monday, Nov. 12, at  
3 p.m. Tickets for Part I. (10 lectures),  
5s., to be obtained from the Lecture  
Secretary, Minerva Café.

The Articles for Sale are on view at the Minerva Exchange, 144, High Holborn, W.C. 1, 10 to 5.30. Saturdays, 10 to 2.

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